

**STRATEGY  
RESEARCH  
PROJECT**

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**AIR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE: THE UNITED STATES  
MILITARY'S PREMIER QUICK REACTION STRIKE FORCE  
'TODAY AND TOMORROW'**

**BY**

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**AIR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE: THE UNITED STATES MILITARY'S  
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## ABSTRACT

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Today's world is marked by accelerating change which will propel us into the next century. As the sole global superpower, our strategic interests are also global. The United States will continue to influence world events and the U.S. military provides the means to accomplish this through power projection. History has shown us that instability and conflict will continue to exist and the military has been effective in securing our national interests. However, our military's forward presence has diminished in the recent years due to downsizing. Our forces are now primarily CONUS-based. Airpower's unique characteristics of speed, range, flexibility and lethality provide the capability to react quickly. The Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) is an operational concept providing the warfighting CINCs a light and lethal force across the spectrum of conflict. The AEF is the nation's premier power projection force, both now and the future.



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The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the complete collapse of the Communist Soviet society in 1991 marked the end of the Cold War. For over forty years the United States structured its armed forces to support a national security strategy rooted in Containment. Emerging from the Cold War as the only remaining global superpower, we now find ourselves in a period of transition. Inherent in this transition period is change and volatility unlike that which we've previously faced. Competing domestic interests have put a strain on military defense spending as the United States and many European countries continue to downsize their military force structure in search of the elusive 'peace dividend'. As we look at today's military force structure, is it postured to support our national security interests anticipated in the next century?

I believe the core of our future military will consist of a CONUS-based force structure capable of projecting both global power and influence in support of our nation's interests. The key military ingredient will focus on airpower which can rapidly respond and demonstrate utility of presence throughout the spectrum of conflict. I maintain that the United States Air Force is postured to meet the future challenges in the form of the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF). I feel the AEF is the military's premier quick reaction strike package, capable of

projecting our country's influence required in support of our national security interests in a world marked with ever increasing change. To support this thesis, I will review past United States expeditionary forces and their relevance to National Security Strategy. Next, I will provide an assessment of the future threat as postulated for the next century through the year 2010. I will then describe the AEF concept and its integral support to National Security strategy, both now and on into the next century.

#### **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The concept of expeditionary forces to support national interests is not new. The New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary defines expedition as, "a journey or voyage to a particular place or for a particular purpose."<sup>1</sup> Expeditionary forces have been an integral part of national strategy dating back to President Theodore Roosevelt. In 1907, he organized and developed what came to be known as "The Great White Fleet". The fleet consisted of 16 naval battleships which took to the high seas and circled the globe between December 1907 and February 1909. President Roosevelt's objectives were fourfold and consisted of the following:

- Allay Californians fear that their coast was threatened by Japanese invasion and to convince Japan that she no longer dominated the Pacific.

- Impress world with America's new-found naval might and secure for this country its just role as a power among nations.

- Stimulate public interest in the US Navy.

- Win support for still unfinished Panama Canal.<sup>2</sup>

President Roosevelt believed that the United States should play a major role in global politics. Through his efforts, the nation was awakened from its isolationist tendencies to one of an active participant on the world's stage. With the expansion of industrialization, the term 'manifest destiny' was echoed throughout the land; namely the right of the United States to extend its influence and boundaries to those areas surrounding it.<sup>3</sup> We often remember President Roosevelt as one who 'spoke softly but carried a big stick'. His 'big' stick was the U.S. Navy. He sent a clear and powerful signal to Japan that they weren't the only Pacific naval power and also reassured America's west coast that he was concerned with their defense.<sup>4</sup> During the fleet's voyage, extensive foreign logistics assistance was required. The Navy needed upwards of 27 coal ships for fuel sustainment purposes. This is not unlike today's Air Force which requires foreign assistance in the form of overseas bases and overflight rights in order to maximize their effectiveness. Overall, the Great White Fleet resulted in a broader interest in

world affairs and the United States became a major, influential power.<sup>5</sup>

Another historical example deals with the United States' involvement in World War I and the deployment of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) to France. President Woodrow Wilson tried unsuccessfully to mediate a political settlement of the European conflict. Germany's decision to attack maritime commerce on the high seas finally forced Wilson's hand. In order to dominate the peace settlement, he had to undertake an armed intervention.<sup>6</sup> However, the U.S. Army was not prepared for an immediate response. With only 133,000 soldiers in the regular army, mobilization efforts took well over a year to attain the eventual 3.7 million men who would serve in the war. In fact, the Secretary of War went before Congress to discuss the perception of the poor mobilization efforts and attributed this feeling to the American peoples impatience, who wanted quick action to show that "our country is great and strong."<sup>7</sup> Gen John J. Pershing was placed in charge of the AEF and given only two orders: one to go to France and one to come home. Pershing believed the AEF should fight as an independent force and vehemently opposed any integration with allied forces. However, the AEF never delivered the decisive blow. The most important

American contribution in World War I consisted of providing the margin of manpower and material needed for the Allies to attrit the enemy forces during the last four months of the war.

Although the AEF failed to provide the knockout punch, President Wilson's strategy still prevailed as he was able to negotiate a peace based on American war aims.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, the concept of a quick reaction military strike force is not new. In the 1950's. General O.P. Weyland, commander of Tactical Air Command, developed the 'Composite Air Strike Force' (CASF). Citing airpower's characteristics of speed and range, the CASF was capable of responding against aggression worldwide. Composition of the CASF included all aircraft types: fighters, bombers, reconnaissance, tankers and airlift. Concept of operations included airpower's employment in a limited war to conduct counter-air, interdiction, close air support, tactical reconnaissance, and airlift operations.<sup>9</sup>

This concept was further expanded in 1961 to include both air and land forces when a new unified command, the United States Strike Command, was formed. Its mission was to maintain a reserve of combat-ready forces to reinforce other unified commands as well as execute contingency operations as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Strike Command forces included both

Army and Air Force units intended to provide an integrated, mobile, instantly available, highly combat-ready force.<sup>10</sup>

Concept of operations included the entire spectrum of warfare from military presence to general war by forming joint Army/Air Force units and moving them rapidly to any point where their services were required.<sup>11</sup>

In 1971, The U.S. Strike Command was replaced by the U.S. Readiness Command. Concept of operations called for an austere headquarters to control CONUS-based major combatant general-purpose forces not assigned to other unified commands.<sup>12</sup> Today, Readiness Command no longer exists. Service air and land forces are now apportioned to theater CINCs through the U.S. Atlantic Command to counter major regional contingencies as outlined in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan.

In the first two examples outlined above, the President was able to achieve and bolster the nation's interests by projecting its strength through the military. As we saw, the military itself has gone through various transformations, all intended to provide the President with a force which is rapid and flexible. Today's world is ever changing with the future demanding increased flexibility associated with the military's power projection capabilities since our forward presence has, and will,

continue to diminish. I will now examine the anticipated world trouble spots we might face in the next century.

#### **FUTURE THREAT**

In today's world we clearly have national interests which extend beyond our immediate borders. Our economic maturity and well-being is interconnected throughout the world's financial markets. The future may well be characterized by new states of questionable stability. Potential problems include the following: ethnic clashes, resource disputes, and militant ideologies.<sup>13</sup>

In analyzing Europe in the next century, risks remain great. There exists the strong possibility of continued or new military conflicts. These include the continuation of ex-Yugoslavia wars with the possibility of drawing neighboring countries directly into the conflict. In addition, ethnic and territorial conflict may arise in the former Warsaw Pact. Finally, the rise of radical Islam could result in refugee movements and the disruption of trade and energy routes in the Southern Mediterranean.<sup>14</sup>

The Near East region from Serbia to Iran involves U.S. national interests and is an area of potential turmoil and future



conflict. Indicators include weak and corrupt national institutions and instability resulting from population pressures. In addition, there exists ideological, religious and ethnic differences. Finally, there are great disparities in resources and income between the nation states, thus providing for excessive arms and military budgets.<sup>15</sup>

America's vital interests in the Far East are also potentially threatened in the turn of the century. Continued instability in North Korea, with a power shift to the South could lead to the North's regime survival with possible support from China. In addition, the continued rise of China as an economic power poses potential conflict with Japan.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the regional challenges outlined above, there will continue to be instability on a worldwide scale. History has shown us that between twenty and thirty conflicts have gone on somewhere in the world every day since the cease-fire from Desert Storm.<sup>17</sup> Yet this is also the same number of conflicts which existed during every day of every year between the end of World War II and the cease-fire in Desert Storm. Needless to say, the United States did not intervene in most of these conflicts. Most of the conflicts were political in nature, prolonged or repetitive struggles and involved different force

mixes with no clear 'bad guy' or 'enemy'.<sup>18</sup> It should be noted that these were not minor incidents, for upwards of ten million have died as a result of direct combat and war related effects. Also, more than two-thirds of the conflicts started suddenly with little or no prediction by the US intelligence community.<sup>19</sup>

In viewing the world at large there exists over 100 nations which face major economic, ethnic, demographic, and religious problems. Almost one-third of the nations in the world have at least one disputed boundary with another third having serious ethnic or religious differences. As highlighted earlier, the world's population and overall economic poverty will continue to increase thus reinforcing and fostering the continuing struggles and instability.

These are but a few examples which demonstrate the continued instability of the nation-state system and vulnerabilities to U.S. vital strategic interests as we proceed into the next century. Clearly the United States can not intervene in every skirmish throughout the world. However, it's clear that not all future conflicts will be as predictable as our strategy of containment was during the Cold War. On the contrary, American use of force will tend to be reactionary with 'emerging deployments' being the norm and not the exception. Therefore,

the best possible strategy, plans and analysis will never be a substitute for flexible forces in being, capable of exerting influence through power projection.<sup>20</sup> I will now review our national and military strategies for the next century and assess the evolutionary changes the Air Force has taken to provide the 'means' required to protect and defend those national interests.

#### **NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY**

The United States has a long-established policy of extending its influence throughout the world. President Roosevelt's Great White Fleet and the American Expeditionary Forces during World War I are but two examples, as outlined earlier. With the end of the Cold War, America stands alone as the world's sole superpower whose interests are global in nature.

The Clinton administration has adopted a National Security Strategy (NSS) of Engagement and Enlargement. The three tenets of the strategy consist of the following: enhancing our security, promoting prosperity at home, and promoting democracy. Inherent in the NSS is the need for a strong defense capability. As an instrument of national power, the United States must be able to deploy robust and flexible forces to protect and advance

U.S. interests. These forces must also be able to accomplish a variety of tasks across a spectrum of conflict.<sup>21</sup>

Our National Military Strategy (NMS) of flexible and selective engagement supports the NSS. The core responsibility of our military remains the capability to fight and win our Nation's wars. However there exists a spectrum of conflict which runs from Peacetime Engagement to Deterrence, and should deterrence fail, to open hostilities. Having significantly downsized our armed forces, forward basing has been dramatically reduced. Therefore, we require a highly mobile and flexible force capable of providing credible power projection to support both the NMS and NSS.<sup>22</sup>

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recently released Joint Vision 2010; the framework of how the Nation's military will meet the challenges outlined above. Joint Vision 2010 looks at future warfighting in the context of four operational concepts: dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full dimensional protection, and focused logistics. These combine to provide 'full spectrum dominance', which will be the key characteristic of the armed forces in the next century.<sup>23</sup>

Given the future instability of the world and the need to foster our prosperity through a strategy of engagement and

enlargement, how has the Air Force adapted to the new principles outlined in Joint Vision 2010?

#### **AIR EXPEDITIONARY FORCE**

In the post-Cold War environment, the United States Air Force redefined itself with a strategic vision describing the use of airpower. This blueprint was called Global Reach-Global Power. Through Global Reach-Global Power, the Air Force identified core competencies derived from airpower's inherent unique characteristics, such as speed, range, and flexibility, essential to supporting the principles outlined in the NSS. Projecting forward to the next century, the Air Force has further codified its role through its new vision of 'Global Engagement'. Core competencies central to meeting the national security interest challenges of today and tomorrow include the following: air and space superiority, global attack, rapid global mobility, and precision engagement.<sup>24</sup>

Airpower's inherent unique characteristics of speed, range, flexibility, precision and lethality codifies today's United States Air Force as the key military instrument needed to obtain entry into practically any theater of operations. The application of airpower can be effective throughout the entire

spectrum of conflict; whereas other force elements, such as Army heavy divisions are best utilized only after a conflict arises and are incapable of projecting a decisive deterrent force quickly from CONUS. The CSAF has described the Air Force as the weapon of choice in dealing with most of the no-notice conflicts and crises the U.S. is likely to face in the future.<sup>25</sup> In fact, Gen Fogleman has stated, "Early in a conflict--with our range, our speed, our flexibility, our maneuverability, our lethality--airmen will normally be first engaged."<sup>26</sup>

Airpower has come of age and has validated the early theorists, such as Giulio Douhet. Douhet believed that the aerial machine was unique and a potent instrument of war. In addition, he felt that airpower should be employed offensively and that victory would be swift and complete based on superior airpower.<sup>27</sup> Clearly this was the case in Desert Storm. Airpower was employed in an asymmetric strategic manner directly against Saddam Hussein's strength, namely his centers of gravity. The air operations proved to be the decisive factor in achieving ultimate victory with minimum casualties as can be seen from the following quotes:

"Gulf War lesson one is the value of air power."  
President George Bush<sup>28</sup>

"The decisive factor in the war with Iraq was the air campaign."

HASC Chmn Les Aspin<sup>29</sup>

"I will say this--and I've said it before and I'll say it again: airpower was decisive in that war."

CJCS Gen Colin Powell<sup>30</sup>

Since Desert Storm, the United States military force structure has continued to get smaller. Although technology has finally caught up with the vision of the early theorists, the Air Force has now downsized its force structure as much as 50% in some areas.<sup>31</sup> Fighter wing equivalents now number 20, half of what existed at the height of the Reagan military buildup. In fact, by the end of 1995, the US Department of Defense had closed 54% of its overseas facilities (about 900 sites).<sup>32</sup> Therefore, as our armed forces continue to downsize, the nation's military will primarily consist of CONUS-based forces.

Forward presence will decline via force-basing, but there will continue to be an urgent need to demonstrate our influence overseas through power projection. Like President's Roosevelt and Wilson before him, President Clinton's administration has chosen to employ military force as a means of influence. However, military force is not merely an extension of diplomacy. The use of force has become all but synonymous from that of diplomacy; reference the unilateral Desert Strike attack on Iraqi

air defense sites this past September.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, it remains incumbent upon the United States to maintain the capability to rapidly mobilize a force which is both light and lethal in support of our national interests.

The decision process to exert influence via military means further reinforces the need to act quickly. This can result in an enemy being thrown off balance and unable to react. As Col John Boyd espoused in his OODA loop model theory, victory goes to the one who Observes, Orients, Decides, and Acts most rapidly. The real objective is to complete one's own OODA cycles faster than the adversary completes his. Therefore, one looks to compress his own cycle while expanding the adversary's cycle time. This focused offensive effort can place the adversary in a world of uncertainty, doubt and confusion; thus leaving him unable to cope with events as they unfold.<sup>34</sup> This was clearly seen during the strategic air campaign of Desert Storm. Within hours after commencing air operations, Saddam Hussein's capability to effectively exercise command and control of his forces was significantly eroded. Although all four elements of the OODA cycle are important, the critical one is orientation, for it contains our heritage and cultural tradition; thus shaping the way we observe, decide and act. In reality, orientation is



the real starting point of the cycle which affects what we decide to observe and then what we decide to do.<sup>35</sup>

The Air Expeditionary Force is best suited to respond within the constraints of the OODA cycle outlined above as the nation's premier quick reaction strike force. Although naval carrier battle groups and marine task forces are also expeditionary in nature, they too have suffered cutbacks and do not number the forces needed to cover all required global locations, all the time.<sup>36</sup> For example, the Global Military Force Presence Policy provides the Commander of CENTCOM a carrier battle group only 75% of the time and there exists two 45-day periods when the CINC's theater strategy and objectives are at a higher risk.

The capabilities of an AEF also allow it to respond well inside normal deliberate planning timelines. The mission of an AEF is to provide deterrence during heightened tensions in the world affecting our national interests.<sup>37</sup> Once deployed, the AEF can sustain operations, redeploy if no longer needed, or be absorbed into the CINCs theater war plan as part of a larger effort should deterrence fail. Airpower's inherent characteristics provide the logical choice during crises situations. Airmen will be in a position to operate within the battlespace while other forces are still deploying. With an AEF,

airpower can be effectively employed to achieve theater situation awareness, stop aggression in its tracks and attack strategic/tactical centers of gravity while other forces are enroute. Only after air dominance is achieved, will the Joint Force Commander be able to transition to a naval or land strategy.<sup>38</sup>

The genesis of the AEF came during 1994 when Saddam Hussein mobilized his ground forces and positioned them in proximity to the Kuwaiti border. As a result, the United States deployed over 400 aircraft to the region to counter the Iraqi threat. Although it took several days to deploy all U.S. forces, the Iraqi's withdrew their forces when the first air augmentees arrived in theater. The operation was considered a success and led Secretary of Defense, William J. Perry to say, "The Air Force has really deterred a war. When we deployed F-15s, F-16s, and A-10s in large numbers, I think they got the message very quickly."<sup>39</sup> This led to the conclusion that a relatively small, well-rounded combat force capable of striking quickly from the U.S. was necessary to counter unexpected real-time contingencies. In addition, the 'small' force could actually have the same deterrent value as a much larger force.<sup>40</sup>

The 'standard' AEF package includes a mix of thirty-plus fighter aircraft (e.g., F-15, F-16). Capabilities include air-to-air superiority, precision air-to-ground attack and suppression of enemy air defenses. This 'standard' package is designed to provide upwards of 80 combat sorties a day in support of the CINC's objectives. This compares quite favorably to a naval carrier battle group which nominally provides 72 daily combat sorties. In addition, U.S. based bombers are placed on dedicated alert when the AEF mobilizes to provide additional backup. Finally, air refueling tankers augment the deployment package when theater resources are insufficient to meet the tasking. The composition and size of the AEF can vary to meet the theater CINCs requirements. The AEF provides increased airpower capabilities to a theater CINC and maintains a constant force presence during periods when there is a gap in carrier battle group coverage as outlined above.<sup>41</sup>

Although the concept of a quick reaction strike force is not new (reference the CASF and mission of the former U.S. Strike Command), an AEF distinguishes itself from its predecessors because of its rapid responsiveness. The AEF is designed to deploy from stateside bases and conduct combat operations in theater within 48 hours of initial notification and no strategic

warning (i.e., from a cold start).<sup>42</sup> The 'standard' package is designed to be light and lethal requiring sufficient airlift to deploy upwards of 600 support personnel to an established location. Austere operating locations and force protection implications may increase the overall package size. In addition, the AEF is designed to be self sustaining for seven days with follow-on airlift support as required for longer durations.<sup>43</sup>

The AEF is a proven concept within CENTCOM's area of responsibility. With insufficient naval carrier battle group coverage supporting United Nations sanctions against Iraq, an AEF has deployed three times. In all cases, the AEF demonstrated a rapid and responsive capability to deploy and employ within 48 hours. Missions supporting Operation Southern Watch (enforcement of Iraqi no-fly zone) were flown within hours of arrival.<sup>44</sup> In addition, non-stop B-52 missions have been launched from CONUS to Kuwait further reinforcing the *global engagement* capability inherent with airpower. Each AEF deployment was to a different location in theater. Although the AEF can deploy to a 'bare base' environment, the current concept of operations entails its deployment to a previously visited foreign airfield. This has several advantages. First, it reduces the overall size of the deployment package by virtue of having pre-positioned stockpiles

(e.g., tents, equipment, munitions) available at the forward operating location (FOL). This, in turn, allows the deployed package to quickly establish operations upon arrival, having previously established the 'corporate history' of operating procedures and policies. This is a critical part of the overall concept and underscores the political challenges of ensuring that beddown locations and overflight rights are established and maintained through diplomatic channels and mil-to-mil contacts. During each AEF deployment to the Gulf Region, regular interaction between U.S. and foreign crews helped standardize tactics and procedures, and proved invaluable in fostering good will.<sup>45</sup>

Until now, AEFs have only been utilized within CENTCOM's area of responsibility. However, the concept has applicability throughout other theaters and in other forms. As stated earlier, the AEF composition can be tailored to meet the CINC's requirements. Therefore, a non-combatant evacuation or intervention operation could be supported by an AEF comprised of C-130s and A-10s while a humanitarian operation might include a package of heavy airlift assets.<sup>46</sup>

Air Expeditionary Forces have utility throughout the entire spectrum of conflict to include insurgencies. History has

demonstrated that insurgencies are the most common type of war over the past fifty years.<sup>47</sup> Future worldwide instability will continue as nation-states seek to deal with exploding populations, stagnant economies and ethnic hatred as outlined earlier. However, modern technology can be used effectively in this environment as well. Reviewing the tenets of guerrilla warfare, according to Mao Tse-tung, insurgencies must transit three phases before attaining ultimate victory: strategic defensive, stalemate, and strategic offensive. Although guerrilla tactics are prevalent during the first two phases, conventional armed conflict emerges during the third. According to Mao Tse-tung, "...regular forces are of primary importance, because it is they alone who are capable of producing this favorable decision."<sup>48</sup> Mao goes on to say that an insurgency *must* transit all three phases to gain victory. A modern day example of the decisiveness and lethality of airpower in this environment can be found in Operation Deliberate Force. The introduction of NATO airpower against Bosnian Serb heavy weapons, logistics, and command facilities stopped this offensive. In fact, the Honorable William Perry, SECDEF, stated, "Deliberate Force (application of airpower) was the absolutely crucial step in bringing the warring parties to the negotiating table at

Dayton leading to the peace agreement."<sup>49</sup> Once again, the effective and timely use of airpower was decisive in attaining and preserving the strategic interests of the United States.

The Air Expeditionary Force concept not only supports the entire spectrum of conflict but also is an integral element of Joint Vision 2010. The principles of an AEF cut across all four operational concepts: dominant maneuver, precision engagement, full dimensional protection, and focused logistics. In analyzing the operational concepts, dominant maneuver relies on the ability to control the battle space while attacking whatever the enemy values. Through airpower's application via an AEF, air and space superiority can be attained thus taking away the enemy's sanctuaries. Similarly, the concept of precision engagement is the ability to apply force very discriminately. This can include both lethal and non-lethal force applications. From precision guided munitions employment to an on-time, on-target airborne insertion, an AEF can provide the means to quickly and precisely respond. With the operational concept of full-dimensional protection comes the idea of force protection, both on the ground and in the air/space. Once again, full dimensional protection means air and space superiority. Employing AEF assets allows not just freedom from attack, but also freedom to attack and denies

the enemy any kind of sanctuary. The final concept is focused logistics. With an AEF, the package is designed to be light and lethal, tailored to meet the theater CINC's requirements. As such, much of what is required is pre-positioned forward at existing forward operating locations, outlined earlier.<sup>50</sup>

The CJCS outlined Joint Vision 2010 as the framework for implementing the National Military Strategy now and in the future. Each service has its own unique strengths and characteristics which support our national interests. Yet there's one domestic area which challenges the entire military and must be integrated into our military strategy as we look forward into the next century, namely the budget. As the CJCS noted, "Before this century ends, defense budgets will shrink to less than half of their 1988 Cold War Apogee. A drop of this magnitude will inevitably change how we think about, plan and build our defenses."<sup>51</sup> In examining the lifecycle costs of key force elements, a comparative analysis reveals a significant efficiency associated with airpower (Figure 1). Costs were determined based on 35-year ownership and included personnel, procurement, and operations and maintenance (O&M). Results indicated that lifecycle costs of a USAF bomber or fighter wing are 50%-60% the cost of a naval carrier and air wing



respectively. In fact, USAF bomber/fighter wings are approximately one third the cost of a naval carrier battlegroup. Comparative data revealed the same relationship between Air Force elements and Army light and heavy divisions.<sup>52</sup> Personnel and O&M costs are likely to claim an ever-increasing portion of future defense budgets to insure that our combat forces maintain a high state of readiness. As a result, it's significant to note that the employment of CONUS-based airpower provides a quick reaction strike capability where such costs would be contained.<sup>53</sup> The Air Force alone can not fight and win our nation's wars. However, the strengths and unique characteristics of the Air Force, via an Air Expeditionary Force, provide a rapid, responsive, and affordable power projection capability throughout the spectrum of conflict.

## **SUMMARY**

In summary, the United States faces significant challenges in the years ahead as it promotes a national strategy of engagement and enlargement. Although the United States has emerged from the Cold War as the world's only global superpower, we will continue to face international challenges. Trends in demographics, economics, and technology all indicate continued

worldwide instability. History has also demonstrated the quick and decisive employment of the military instrument of national power as an effective means to secure our strategic, global interests, such as Operation Desert Strike. Future U.S. military force structure will continue to decline forcing us to rely on the concept of power projection through a CONUS-based force. With declining defense budgets, we can not depend on or afford to build the number of naval carrier task forces or Marine expeditionary groups to support all the global requirements we face. However, the Air Force is positioned today, via *global engagement*, to support our military strategy and Joint Vision 2010 by way of the Air Expeditionary Force. The AEF provides tailored options for a broad variety of overseas contingencies. AEFs combine airpower's inherent strengths of rapid response plus the economies of CONUS basing with the immediate operational response of theater-based assets. The speed, range, lethality and flexibility of land-based fighters, backed by the global attack capability of long range bombers provide a credible deterrence package for the warfighting CINC. Air Expeditionary Forces also have utility throughout the spectrum of conflict. From peacetime engagement, to deterrence of conflict, to fighting and winning our nation's wars, AEFs can be tailored to provide

quick and decisive responses. Therefore, it's clear that the AEF has emerged as the nation's premier power-projection force, capable of supporting our national interests and reinforcing our influence as the world's only superpower; today and into the next century.

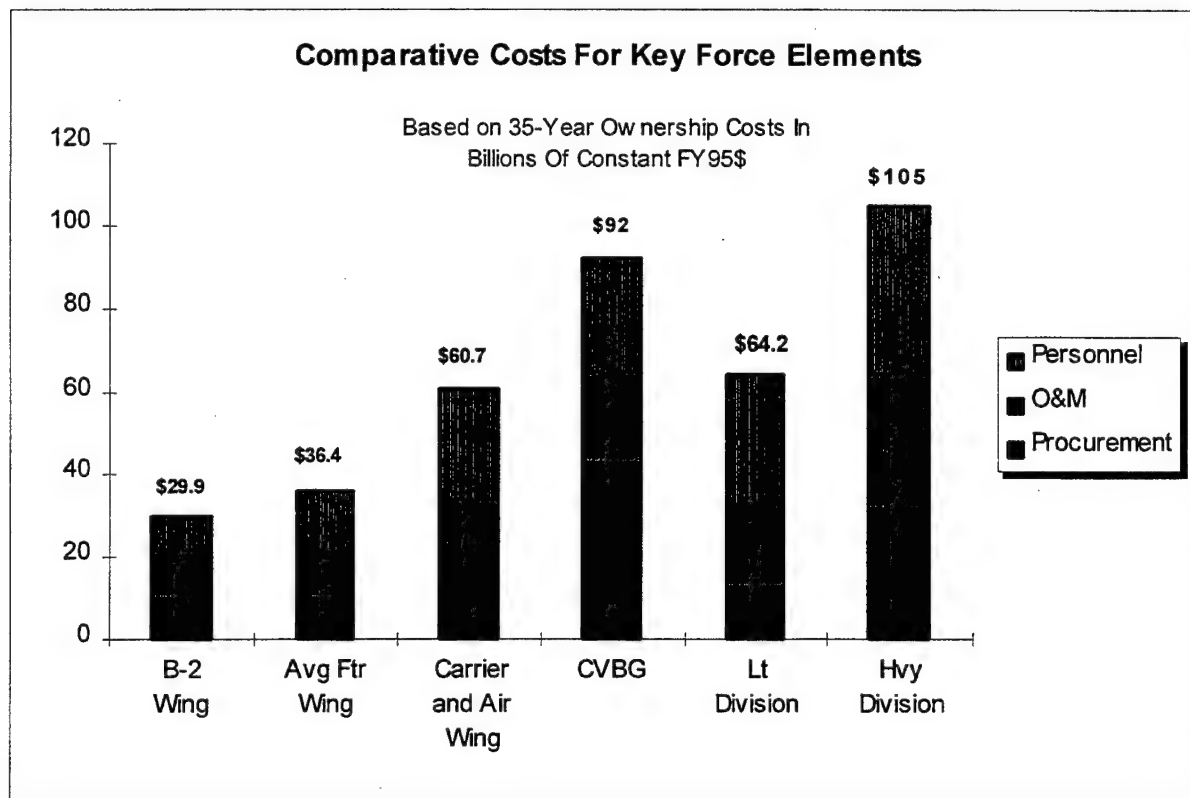


Figure 1



## ENDNOTES

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<sup>2</sup>Samuel Carter III, The Incredible Great White Fleet (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1971), 1,2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 11.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 178.

<sup>6</sup>David F. Trask, The AEF And Coalition Warmaking, 1917-1918 (Kansas: University Press, 1993), 2.

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<sup>10</sup>Department of the Air Force, "A New Command--Unified And Combat Ready, Air Force Information Policy Letter Supplement For Commanders (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Air Force, Number 113, 1962), 16.

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<sup>15</sup>Alan R. Goldman and Eric Vardac, "Threats To The New World Order," Military Intelligence (January-March 1993): 45.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 45,46.

<sup>17</sup>Anthony H. Cordesman, Senior Fellow and Co-Director Middle East Studies Program CSIS, Speech To The U.S. Army War College, November 14, 1996, 12.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 13,15.

<sup>21</sup>The White House, A National Security Strategy Of Engagement And Enlargement (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 11-13.

<sup>22</sup>Chairman Of The Joint Chiefs Of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States of America 1995 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), ii,iii.

<sup>23</sup>Chairman Of The Joint Chiefs Of Staff, Joint Vision 2010 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996), 1,2.

<sup>24</sup>"Global Engagement: A Vision For The 21st Century Air Force," linked from United States Air Force Homepage, <<http://www.af-future.hq.af.mil/21/index.htm>>. 22 November 1996, 4.

<sup>25</sup>John A. Tirpak, "First Force," Air Force Magazine (September 1996): 34.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 36.

<sup>27</sup>Donaldson D. Frizzell, "Early Theories Of Air Strategy," in Military Strategy: Theory And Application, ed. Col Arthur F. Lykke, Jr. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College, 1993), 164.

<sup>28</sup>Gen Ronald R. Fogleman, USAF, "Advantage USA 'Air Power And Asymmetric Force Strategy'," in Implementing National Military Strategy Vol III, (Carlisle Barracks PA: United States Army War College, 1996), 15-8.

<sup>29</sup>Donald B. Rice, Global Reach Global Power 'The Evolving Air Force Contribution To National Security' (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Air Force, 1992), 14-31.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 14-32.

<sup>31</sup>"The Use Of Force In The Post-Cold War Environment," linked from United States Air Force Homepage at "Air Force Link," <[http://www.dtic.mil/airforcelink/p...t/The\\_Use\\_of\\_Force\\_in\\_the\\_Pos.html](http://www.dtic.mil/airforcelink/p...t/The_Use_of_Force_in_the_Pos.html)>. 18 September 1996, 2.

<sup>32</sup>Department of Defense, Report of the Secretary of Defense to the President and the Congress (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), 137.

<sup>33</sup>A.J. Bacevich and Lawrence F. Kaplan, "The Clinton Doctrine," The Weekly Standard (30 September 1996): 16,17.

<sup>34</sup>Col Edward C. Mann III, USAF, Thunder And Lightning 'Desert Storm And The Airpower Debates' (Alabama: Air University Press, 1995), 148.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 152.

<sup>36</sup>Tirpak, 40.

<sup>37</sup>Air Force Link, 3,4.

<sup>38</sup>Tirpak, 36.

<sup>39</sup>Department of Defense, Report of the Secretary of Defense, 137.

<sup>40</sup>Col Brian E. Wages, USAF-Ret., "The First With The Most 'USAF's Air Expeditionary Force Takes The Offensive On Power Projection'," Armed Forces Journal (September 1996): 68.

<sup>41</sup>Lt Gen John P. Jumper, USAF, Airpower Expeditionary Force (Department Of The Air Force, Washington, D.C., 1996), 5-9.

<sup>42</sup>Wages, 68.

<sup>43</sup>Jumper, 10,12,13.



<sup>44</sup>Pat McKenna, "Controlling The Air," Airman (October 1996): 6.

<sup>45</sup>Wages, 71.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Col Jeffery R. Barnett, USAF, "Defeating Insurgents With Technology," Airpower Journal (Summer 1996): 69.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 70.

<sup>49</sup>Vickie M. Graham, "'New Age' Air Power," Airman (October 1996): 3.

<sup>50</sup>"Ready For The Future," linked from Defense Issues: Volume 11 at "Defense Link," <<http://www.dtic.mil/defenselink/pubs/di96/di1187.html>>, 1 November 1996, 4,5.

<sup>51</sup>John M. Shalikashvili, "A Word from the Chairman," Joint Force Quarterly (Autumn/Winter 1994-5): 5.

<sup>52</sup>Charles M. Perry, Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., and Joseph C. Conway, Long-Range Bombers & the role of Airpower in the New Century (New Hampshire: Puritan Press Inc., 1995), 57.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 58.

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